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This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 14, 2005. Claims 1 to 3 are in the application, of which Claim 1 is still the only independent claim. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,560,256 (Seki) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,757,311 (Abe), and Claims 2 and 3 were rejected further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,625,189 (McCaul). In response to these rejections, the substance of Claim 4 has been incorporated into independent Claim 1, and Claim 4 has consequently been canceled. Accordingly, this should be viewed as a traversal of the rejection of Claim 4.

The invention relates to a multilaser device usable in an image forming apparatus to form an electrostatic image on a photosensitive member. The multilaser device emits a plurality of laser beams from a respective plurality of laser chips. According to one feature of the invention, a second laser chip is produced from the same wafer lot as that of a first laser chip, such that a layer structure of the second laser chip is the same as the layer structure of the first laser chip.

By virtue of the foregoing arrangement, in which the first and second laser chips are produced from the same wafer lot and have the same layer structure, it is possible to avoid problems leading to deterioration in quality that otherwise might be found in conventional devices. Specifically, in conventional devices, each of a plurality of laser beams output by a multilaser device can vary greatly from laser beam to laser beam,

because these laser beams are produced from different wafer lots or have different layer structure. Such problems are largely avoided according to the invention herein, wherein the first and second laser chips are produced from the same wafer lot and have the same layer structure.

In maintaining the rejection over Seki in view of Abe and McCaul, the Office Action concedes that the citation to Seki does not disclose laser chips from the same wafer lot. Reliance was placed on Abe for such a feature, but Applicant continues to insist that such reliance is misplaced.

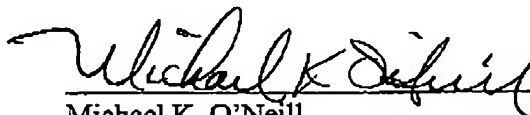
Specifically, Abe discloses the construction of multiple laser beams, but the invention of Abe does not relate to a multilaser used for an image forming apparatus. Furthermore, Abe does not disclose at least the feature of a second laser chip produced from the same wafer lot as that of the first laser chip, wherein the layer structure of the second laser chip is the same as the layer structure of the first laser chip. Instead, and as explained in a previous response, Abe's Figure 5A shows laser diodes LD1 and LD2, but these laser chips each have different layered structure ST1 and ST2, respectively. For example, laser diode LD1 is formed of a four-layered structure ST1, whereas laser diode LD2 is formed from an eight-layered structure ST2. It is therefore inconceivable that the structure shown in Abe's Figure 5A shows first and second laser chips produced from the same wafer lot, or that the structure shown in Abe's Figure 5A shows first and second laser chips having the same layer structure.

In maintaining the rejection over Abe, pages 3 and 4 of the Office Action explained that formation of laser chips in wafer lots is very well known in the art, such that modification of Abe's Figure 5A would include the case where laser chips are formed in the same wafer lot. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assessment of Abe, and respectfully asserts that such a change would alter a fundamental purpose of Abe's Figure 5A. Specifically, as explained beginning at line 43 of Abe's column 8, the Figure 5A structure is deliberately designed so as to emit completely different laser lights from each of laser diodes LD1 and LD2. Laser diode LD1 is specifically designed for CD light emission at a wavelength of around 718 nm, whereas laser diode LD2 is specifically designed for DVD light emission at a wavelength of around 650 nm. Thus, Abe deliberately designed his Figure 5A structure such that laser diodes LD1 and LD2 are different. The proposed modification in the Office Action would destroy the fundamental purpose of Abe's Figure 5A, since it would result in a laser diode structure where both laser diodes emit at exactly the same wavelength. Since such a modification would destroy the fundamental purpose and principle of operation for Abe's Figure 5A, it simply could not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill. See MPEP § 2143.01(VI): "If the proposed modification or combination of the prior art would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified, then the teachings of the references are not sufficient to render the claims *prima facie* obvious."

McCaul has been reviewed, but is not seen to add anything to the above-noted deficiencies of Abe and Seki. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the claims herein define subject matter that would not have been obvious from any permissible combination of these references, and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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